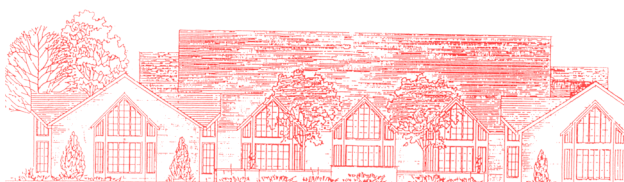


LEWES PUBLIC LIBRARY

**111 Adams Avenue
Lewes, Delaware 19958
(302) 645-2733**



The Lewes Public Library has its roots in the late 1700's when local private collections were gathered at a central location for general circulation. It took until 1877, however, before the Lewes Library Association was formed and arrangements were made to house the 600-volume library in the Odd Fellows Hall.

A Lewes Library Commission was formed in 1934 for the maintenance of the Lewes Public Library. The following year, sufficient funds had been raised locally to open a library on the second floor of the Zwaaendael Museum.

By 1961, the museum collection was expanding and needed the space occupied by the library. Arrangements were made with the City commissioners to use a wing of the newly built Town Hall. Quickly outgrowing even these quarters, Virginia Marshall, library director, set out to correct the problem. Working closely with Florence Coltman, the two founded the Friends of the Lewes Public Library, which became the motivating force behind the building of a separate library.

In recent years, expansion has been required yet again. In 1988, the library moved into its present location at Kings Highway and Adams Avenue. And on October 14, 2000, the Lewes Public Library officially opened two new wings: the Barbara Moon Children's Wing and the Florence Coltman Research Wing. The \$1 million additions and renovations nearly doubled the size of the library, which now measures close to 14,000 square feet.

The Lewes Public Library has grown as the community and cultural center of the town. Centrally located, the library is within walking distance from the elementary, middle and high schools. The library serves as school library for the Sussex Consortium, Sussex County's school for the Delaware Autism Program and the Intensive Learning Center, as well as for the Sussex Academy of Lifelong Learning at the College of Marine Studies.

Key Individuals

Virginia Marshall served as Lewes Public Library director in the 1960's and was one of the original founders of the Friends of the Lewes Public Library. *Florence Coltman* was also a founder of the Friends of the Lewes Public Library and a driving force behind the first separate library building in Lewes.